

REMARKS

We have amended the claims to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention. Upon entering the amendments presented herein, claims 1-4 and 6-14 will be pending in this application.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 6-7, 9-10, and 12-13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Lumelsky (U.S. 6,081,780) in view of Meredith (U.S. 6,081,780). The Examiner admits that “Lumelsky does not explicitly disclose the alignment of the spoken word utterance and the synthesized word.” For this missing feature, he relies on Meredith.

But we note that Lumelsky is missing more than the Examiner appears to recognize. Lumelsky does not apply his prosodic parameters to the word that is synthesized from the same word from which he extracted those parameters. That is, Lumelsky does not extract prosodic parameters from a spoken utterance, recognize the spoken utterance, synthesize a nominal word from the recognized word, and then apply the prosodic parameters to that synthesized nominal word to generate a prosodic mimic. More specifically, Lumelsky does not teach or suggest:

extracting one or more prosodic parameters from the spoken utterance;  
performing speech recognition on the spoken utterance to generate a recognized word;  
from the recognized word that is generated from the speech recognition,  
synthesizing a nominal word; and  
generating a prosodic mimic word from the synthesized nominal word and the extracted one or more prosodic parameters,

Rather, Lumelsky applies his extracted prosody representation to words that are synthesized from text, i.e., other words. The words in the text are not recognized words that were generated by recognizing spoken utterances; they are simply text words of an article or some other document that is to be read.

Lumelsky’s invention relates to a way to compress text that is to be sent to a user over a bandwidth limited channel. Basically, he does this by sending the phonetic representation of the text along with a prosodic representation. His system operates as follows:

The authoring system of the invention corrects the intonation and adds emotional content to the audio delivery. The authoring system embodies a speech processing system which compares audio produced by an operator (narrator), who reads the text aloud, with the speech synthesized artificially from the same text. The comparison results are used to

improve a phonetic representation of the text. Subsequently, prosodic information is sent along with the phonetic representation of the text data to the customer terminal, where it serves to add the required "humanity" to the resulting audio output. (Col. 11, line 61 to col. 12, line 4).

This makes clear that Lumelsky does not recognize utterances to generate recognized words. Indeed, his system does not need to perform speech recognition since the words are available in the form of the text that is read by the narrator. Lumelsky generates the synthesized words directly from that available text, not from words that are generated by a speech recognition engine.

At the customer site, the utterance that was used to generate the prosodic representation is not available. So, the customer is not able to perform any speech recognition on the spoken text that was used to generate the prosodic representation.

For the reasons stated above, we believe that the claims are allowable and therefore ask the Examiner to allow them to issue.

Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account No. 08-0219.

Dated: May 24, 2007

Respectfully submitted,



Eric L. Prahls  
Registration No.: 32,590  
Attorney for Applicant(s)

Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP  
60 State Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02109  
(617) 526-6000 (telephone)  
(617) 526-5000 (facsimile)